



# **THE MIDDLE AGES: THE REIGN OF RELIGION**



# 4 MAJOR SHIFTS OCCURRED THAT HAD EFFECTS ON WESTERN CULTURE

- ◆ **Cultural leadership moved north from the Mediterranean to France, Germany and British Isles**
- ◆ **Christianity triumphed over paganism and barbarism**
- ◆ **Emphasis shifted from the here and now to afterlife (fear of Hell)**
- ◆ **A shift in the body - seen previously as beautiful to a body as corrupt**



# ART WAS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH IN BYZANTINE EMPIRE

- ◆ **Nudes forbidden**
- ◆ **Bodies often misrepresented correct anatomy and proportion**
- ◆ **Lost Greek value of balance between body and mind**
- ◆ **Interested in soul**
- ◆ **Wanted to attract and inspire new believers**





# GOLDEN AGE OF BYZANTINE ART



- Icons were small wooden panels believed to possess supernatural powers
- Images typically rigid frontal poses often with halos and wide staring eyes
- Ardent believers carried them into battle and wore away the faces by kissing them
- The cult of icons became so powerful, they were banned from 726-843 as a violation of the commandment against idolatry



# ROMAN MOSAICS



- Used marble cubes
- Colors limited due to use of natural stones
- Typically found on floors of private homes
- Subjects were secular, like battle, games
- Background represented landscape



# BYZANTINE MOSAICS



- Used reflective glass cubes
- Glowing glass with wide range of colors
- Found on walls and ceilings especially church dome
- Subjects were religious
- Large cubes in stylized designs
- Background was abstract, sky-blue then gold



# BYZANTINE MOSAICS



- **Intended to help share the new religion**
- **Often depicted Christ as teacher**
- **Human figures are flat, stiff, symmetrically placed.**
- **Almond-shaped faces, solemn expressions, no movement**



# HAGIA SOPHIA

CONSTANTINOPLE (ISTANBUL, TURKEY) 532-37



- Nearly 3 football fields long, this church combined Roman rectangular basilica layout with a huge central dome
- A church, later converted into a mosque ([video link](#))
- Masterpiece of Byzantine architecture



# HAGIA SOPHIA

CONSTANTINOPLE (ISTANBUL, TURKEY) 532-37



- ***Pendentives*** - 4 arches formed a square supporting the dome
- **40 arched windows encircle the base of the dome creating the illusion halo of light**

# ROMANESQUE



South transept of Tournai Cathedral, Belgium

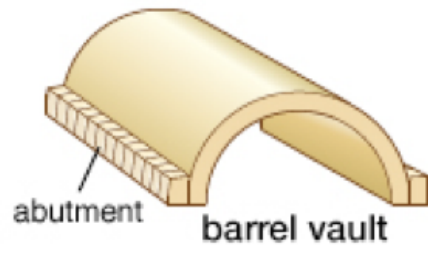


# ROMANESQUE ART: STORIES IN STONE

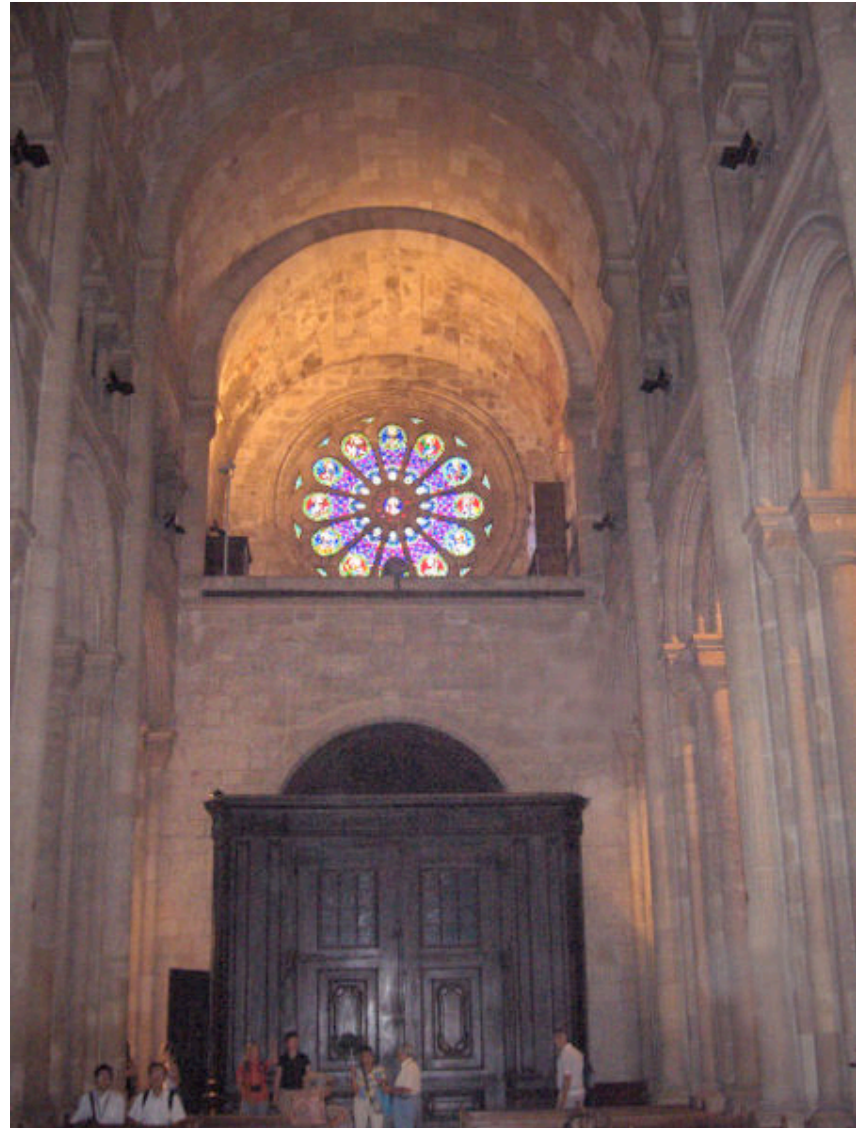


- **Romanesque: builders borrowed elements from Roman architecture such as round arches and columns**
- **Roman roofs were timber and prone to fire, so builders started to use the vault system so roof could be made of stone**
- **Exterior of buildings rather plain**
- **Sculptures taught stories to the illiterate**

# Barrel vault



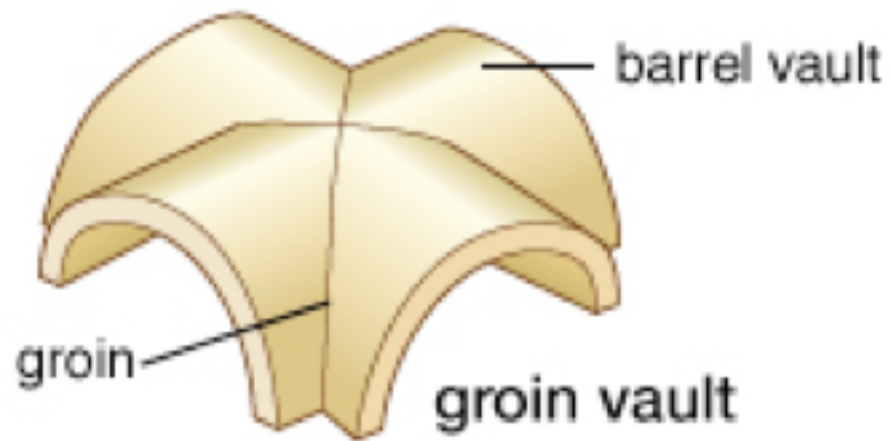
*Cloaca Maxima, Rome*



Cathedral of Lisbon, Portugal



# Groin vault



Basilica Palladiana, Vicenza, Italy

# GIOTTO: PIONEER PAINTER

## FRESCO PAINTING



- Giotto broke away from the frozen Byzantine style for softer more lifelike forms
- Frescoes are paintings on damp plaster



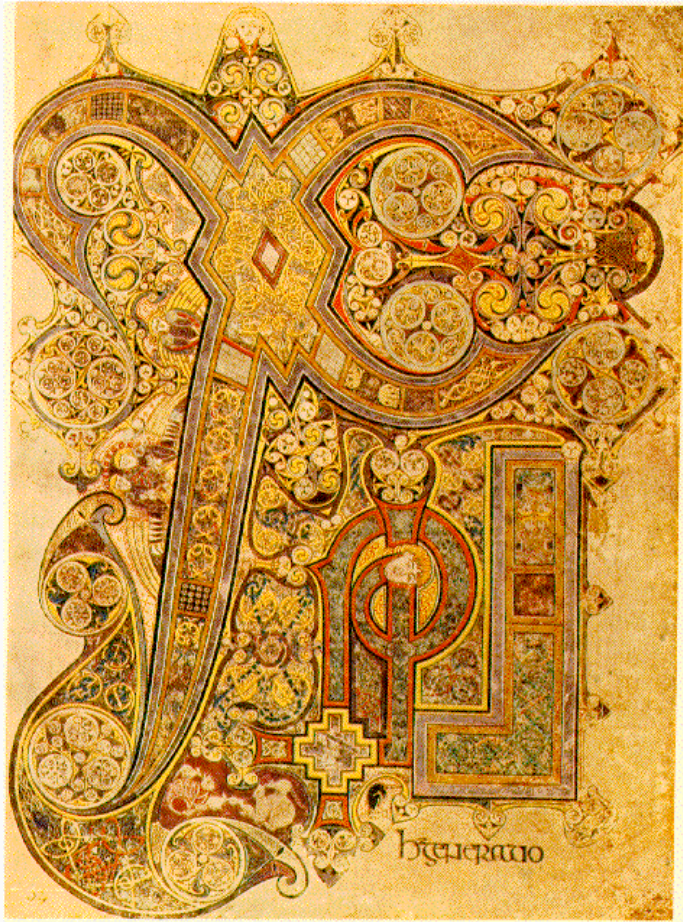
# GIOTTO'S MOSAICS



- **Giotto painted many murals on the walls of churches**
- **Notice the brilliant blue color**
- **Blue and red were very expensive paints**



# ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS



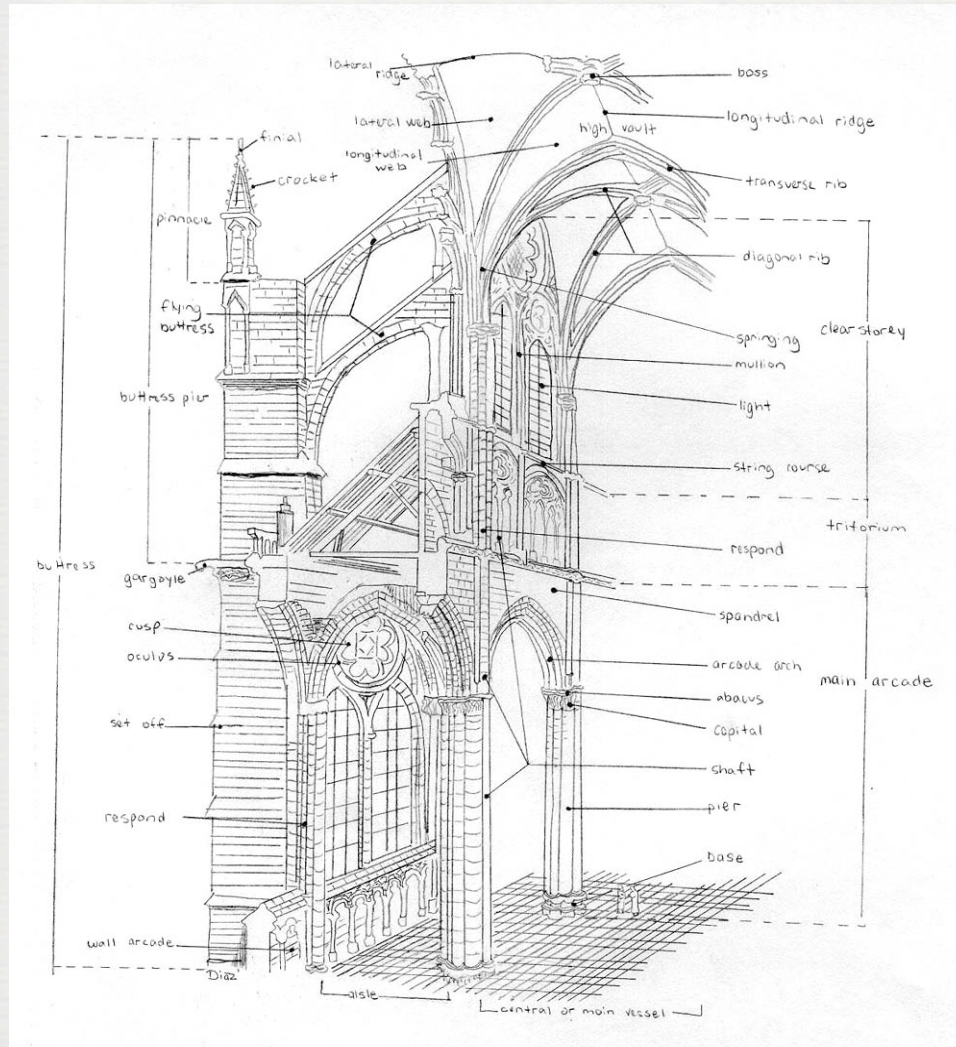
- With hordes of pillagers looting and razing cities of the former Roman empire, monasteries were all that stood between Western Europe and total chaos
- Vellum (calfskin) or parchment ( lambskin) were decorated lavishly
- These manuscripts were the only form of books in existence until printing press developed in 15<sup>th</sup> century







# GOTHIC BUILDING BLOCKS



- The chief forms of inspiration in Gothic cathedrals were sculpture, stained glass and tapestries

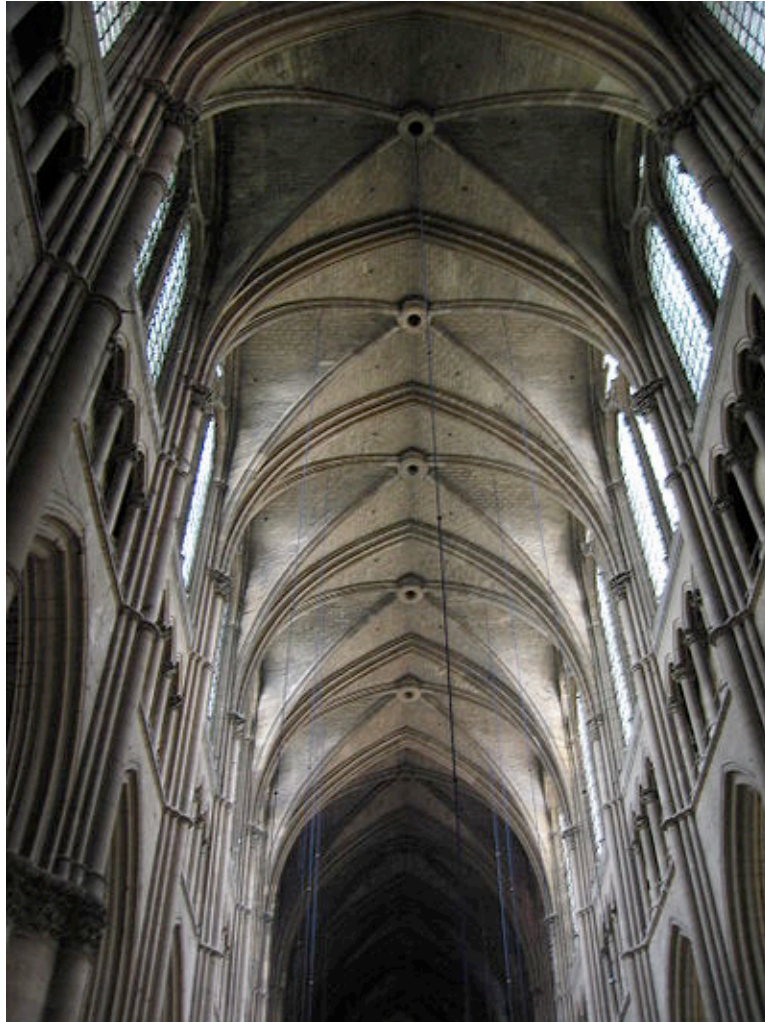
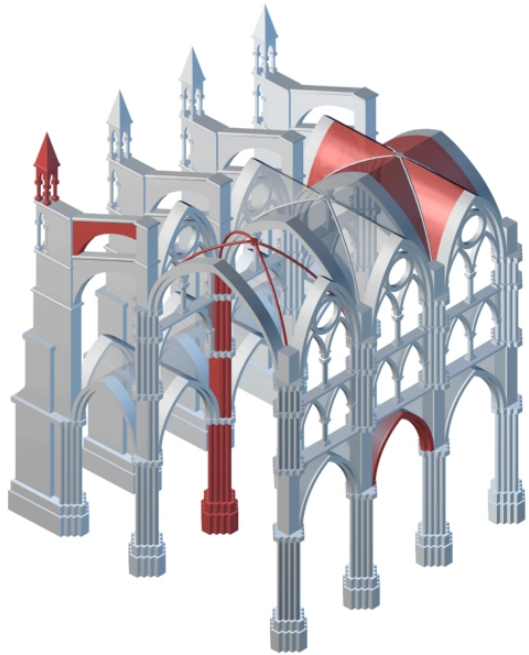


# GOTHIC



Cathedral of Notre Dame, Paris

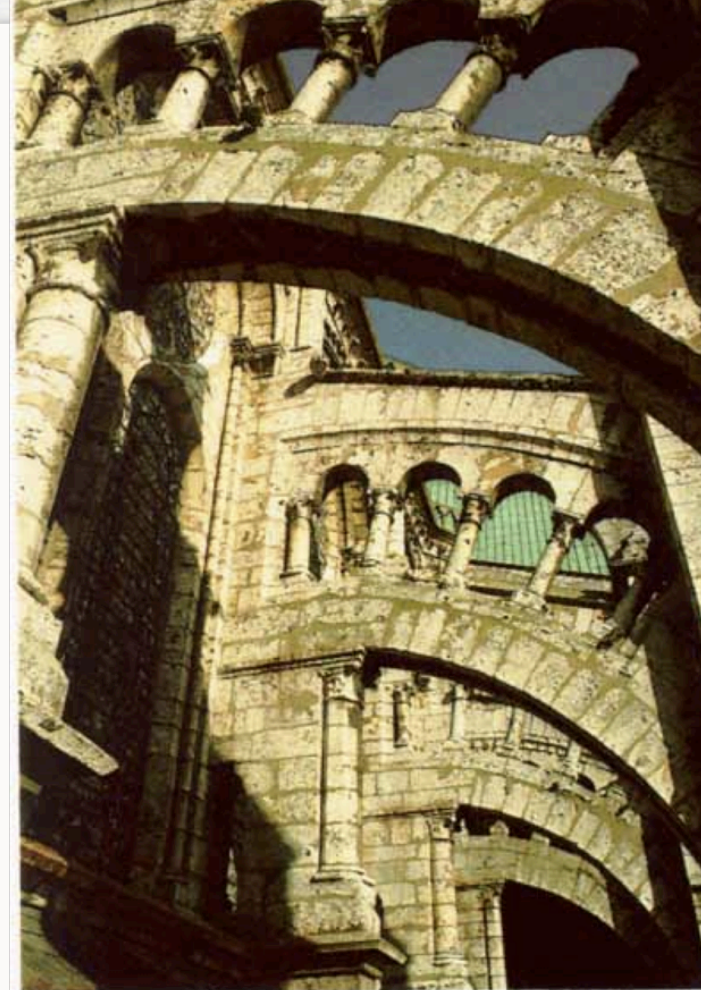
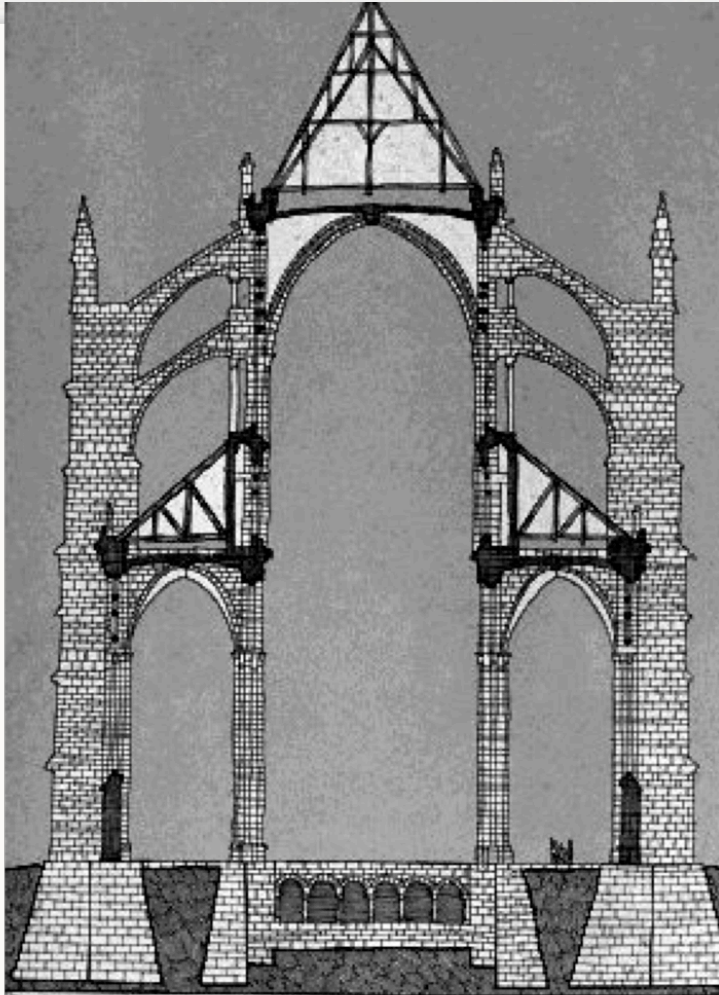
# Gothic Building Blocks: Ribbed vault



Reims Cathedral



# FLYING BUTTRESSES





# FLYING BUTTRESSES





# REIMS CATHEDRAL

## 1220-36 FRANCE



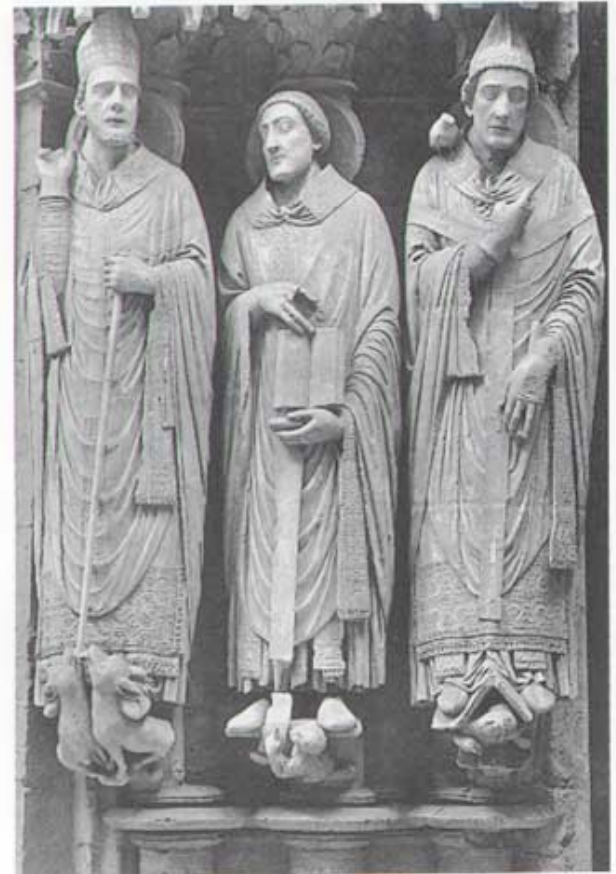
- Gothic churches had pointed arches and more natural sculpture
- Soaring height due to exterior buttresses
- Ribbed vaults
- Richly decorated with sculpture



# GOTHIC SCULPTURE



**Sculpture  
developed  
from stiff,  
disproportion  
ed long  
figures to a  
more rounded  
style  
later in Gothic  
period**





# GOTHIC ART: HEIGHT AND LIGHT



Saint Chapelle, Paris



# GOTHIC ART: HEIGHT AND LIGHT

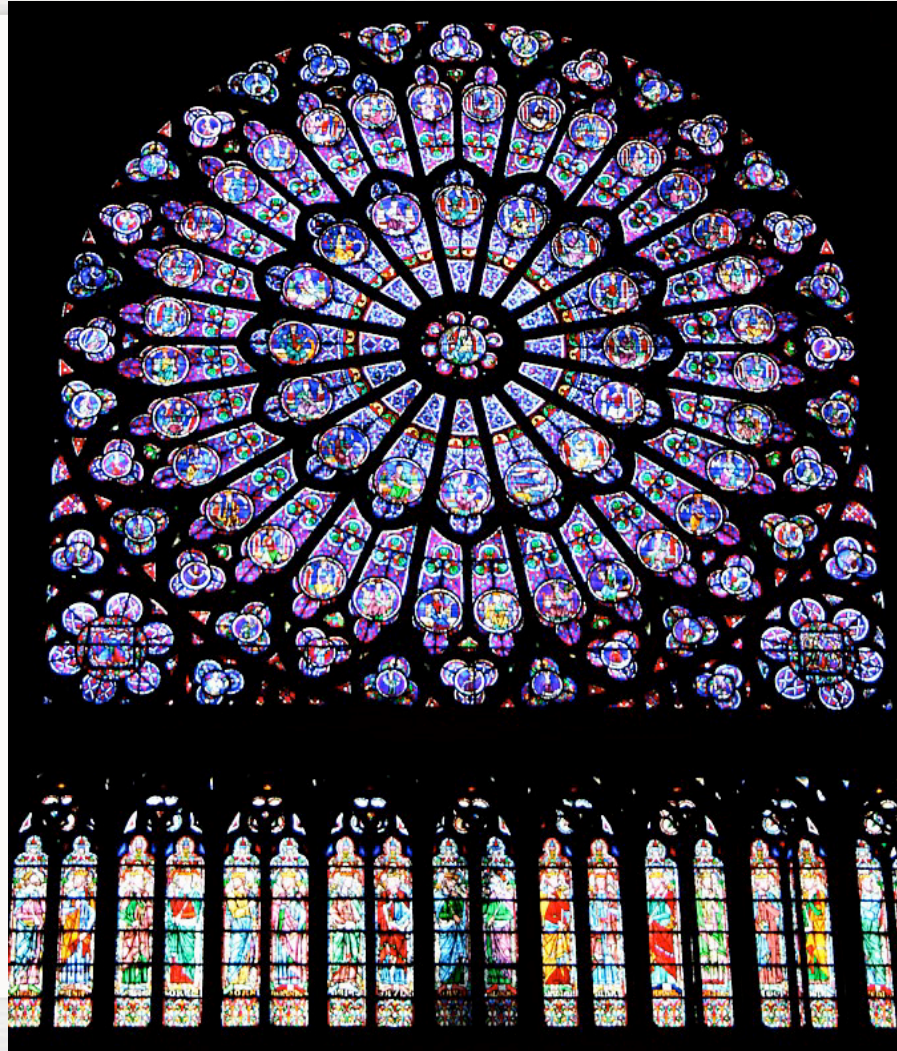
- Buildings were technological daring and unprecedented in world architecture
- Ribbed vault and external supports called flying buttresses supported the walls
- Huge stained glass windows flooded the interior with light
- Pointed arch increased the reality and the illusion of greater height
- Buildings were so elaborate that construction literally took ages—600 years for the Cologne, Germany Cathedral





# ROSE WINDOW

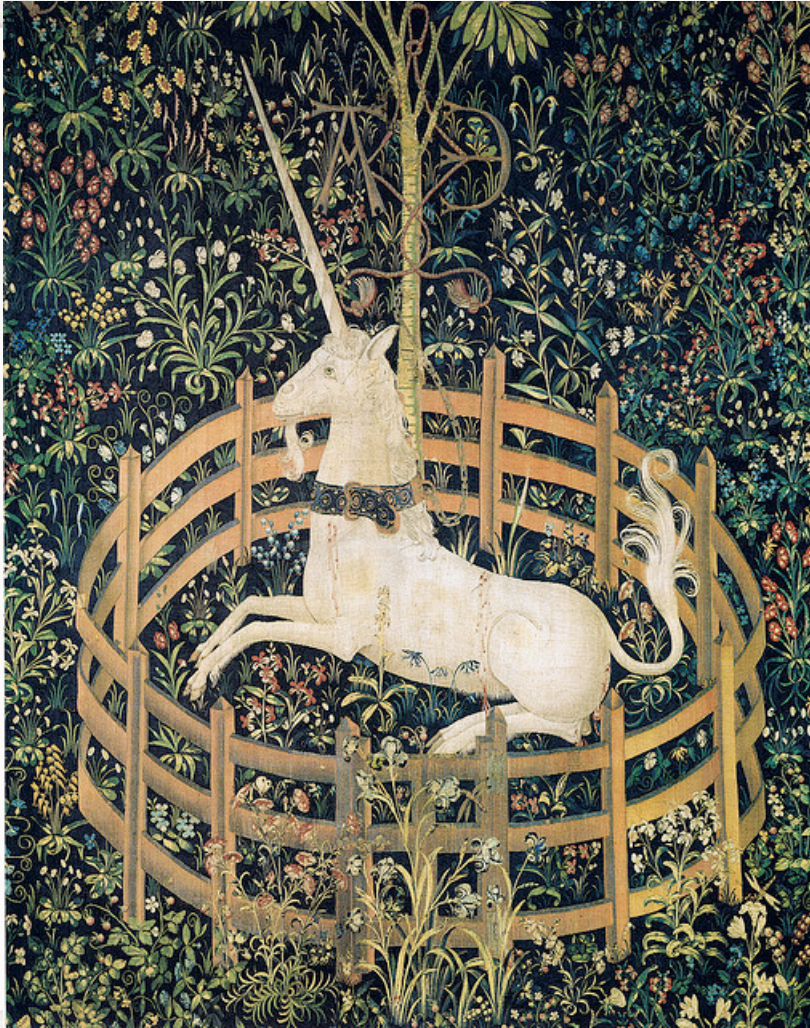
## CHARTRES CATHEDRAL



- **Chartres Cathedral is a multi-media masterpiece**
- **The medieval glass measures 26,900 feet in total area**
- **Windows are like a gigantic glowing illuminated manuscript**
- **Told religious stories**



# TAPESTRY: "THE UNICORN IN CAPTIVITY"



- Huge wool and silk weavings
- used to cut drafts
- decorated stone walls in chateaus and churches



# SUMMARY

- Art hardly died in the Middle Ages, but what came next was the **Renaissance** and art became lifelike again

